

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01  
USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /030 W  
-----200632Z 109242 /11

R 180830Z JAN 77  
FM AMCONSUL NICE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1252  
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMCONSUL BORDEAUX  
AMCONSUL LYON  
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE  
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 NICE 0023

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, FR  
SUBJECT: ELECTION PROSPECTS IN NICE CONSULAR DISTRICT

1. AS IN OTHER AREAS OF FRANCE, THE STATUS OF THE MUNICIPAL ELECTION LISTS IN MANY TOWNS IN THE NICE CONSULAR DISTRICT REMAINS UNSETTLED. IN SPITE OF PROLONGED NEGOTIATIONS, THE SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO AGREE ON JOINT LISTS IN SEVERAL CITIES, INCLUDING VALLAURIS AND PUGET-THENIERS. THE P.C.F. DEPARMENTAL HEADQUARTERS ANNOUNCED RECENTLY THAT THE PROSPECTS OF A COMMON LIST WERE "GOOD" IN 4 OUT OF 13 CITIES OF MORE THAN 10,000 INHABITANTS IN THE ALPES MARITIMES. MAJOR TRENDS IN SOME OF THE MORE IMPORTANT CITIES IN THE AREA, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF CORSICA WHICH WILL BE SUBJECT OF A SEPARATE MESSAGE, ARE INDICATED BELOW.

2. NICE - (POPULATION: 346,400) THE MUNICIPAL LISTS FOR THE CITY OF NICE ARE STILL NOT FIRM, BUT FROM ALL INDICATIONS THERE WILL BE AT LEAST THREE IN NUMBER : A) MAJORITY  
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(JACQUES MEDECIN), B) PS/PCF AND C) JOBERTIST (JACQUES BOUNCIN). MEDECIN'S PAST CAMPAIGNS HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY WON DUE, FIRST OF ALL, TO THE NICE TRADITION OF HAVING A MEDECIN AT CITY HALL AND ALSO BECAUSE OF THE SOLID PEID-NOIR SUPPORT FOR HIM THROUGHOUT THE CITY. SINCE 1975 MEDECIN HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE INDEPENDENT REPUBLICAN PARTY, HAVING PREVIOUSLY BEEN A CENTRIST. MEDECIN'S

GRANDFATHER WAS A MUNICIPAL COUNCILLOR AND HIS FATHER, JEAN, WAS MAYOR OF THE CITY FROM 1928 TO 1965. JACQUES MEDECIN, ALSO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TOURISM, HAS NOT BEEN MAYOR FOR ELEVEN YEARS AND HAS DONE MUCH, IN HIS FREE-WIELDING WAY, IN PROMOTING AND IMPROVING TOURIST POTENTIAL OF HIS CITY. IN THE 1971 ELECTIONS, HE RECEIVED A TOTAL OF 51 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. THERE ARE SOME LOCAL OBSERVERS WHO FEEL THAT MEDECIN MAY EXPERIENCE SOME DIFFICULTIES IN HIS RE-ELECTION BID, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT NICE WILL BE VOTING BY DISTRICTS (3) FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE FORTHCOMING MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS. THE DISTRICT TO THE WEST OF THE CITY (CALIFORNIA, SAINT-AUGUSTIN AREAS) MAY GO TO THE OPPOSITION DUE TO THE HEAVY CONCENTRATION OF THE P.C.F. VOTERS IN THE AREA. ACCORDING TO MEDECIN, HIS LIST OF 49 COUNCILLORS PLUS THEIR DEPUTIES WILL INCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE MAJORITY, RADICALS, R.P.R., R.I., AS WELL AS AT LEAST FIVE MEMBERS OF THE FEDERATION DES SOCIALISTES DEMOCRATES. ALSO MEDECIN WISHES TO INCLUDE ON HIS LIST SEVERAL TECHNICIANS, IN ADDITION TO POLITICIANS; HE WILL THUS HAVE SEVERAL WELL-KNOWN LOCAL FIGURES, INCLUDING ENGINEERS AND ACADEMICIANS ON HIS LIST. ACCORDING TO THE FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE ALPES MARITIMES, MR. DE BURY, JACQUES MEDECIN HAS DIMINISHED HIS CHANCES FOR AN OVERWHELMING VICTORY DUE TO THE FACT THAT, AS HE NOW HAD ENTERED THE MAJORITY, HE HAS SPLIT THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL. AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE DISCONTENT WITHIN THE COUNCIL, HE POINTED OUT THE RECENT DEPARTURE OF JACQUES BOUNIN WHO IS NOW FORMING A LIST, TOGETHER WITH GENERAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BINOCHE, UNDER THE PATRONAGE AND DIRECT ASSISTANCE OF MICHEL JOBERT (MOVEMENT DEMOCRATE). BOUNIN RESIGNED FROM THE NICE CITY COUNCIL BECAUSE OF A DISAGREEMENT INVOLVING AN ENGLISH BASED COMPANY IN THE CTY. AN ADDITIONAL PROBLEM FACING MEDECIN IN HIS BID IS UNKNOWN FACTOR REPRESENTED BY THE VOTING HABITS OF THE NEWLY ARRIVED PERMANENT RESIDENTS OF THE CITY. IT IS A STATISTICAL FACT, THAT OVER 6,000 NEW RESIDENTS (MOSTLY RETIRED COUPLES FROM THE NORTH) ARRIVE IN NICE EACH YEAR. A THIRD SOURCE OF POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES FOR MEDECIN IS THE STRENGTH OF HIS SEVERAL ENEMIES IN THE CITY, NOT THE LEAST OF WHOM IS MICHEL BAVASTRO, THE OWNER/EDITOR OF THE LOCAL DAILY "NICE-MATIN-.

COMMON PROGRAM - THE NICE COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALISTS PARTY HAS RECENTLY MADE THE FOLLOWING PROPOSALS FOR THE CITY OF NICE WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE P.C.F.

- MAYOR AND FIRST ADJOINT - P.C.F.

- 1ST SECTOR 10 P.C.F. 6 P.S. 1 M.R.G.  
- 2ND SECTOR 10 P.C.F. 7 P.S. 1 M.R.G.  
- 3RD SECTOR 8 P.C.F. 5 P.S. 1 M.R.G.

UNQUOTE

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ACTION EUR-12

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THROUGHOUT THE ALPES MARITIMES, THE P.C.F. COUNTS 7,700 MEMBERS ORGANIZED INTO 390 BASIC UNITS. TODAY'S TOTAL MEMBERSHIP REPRESENTS A 9 PERCENT INCREASE SINCE THE END OF 1975 AND 25 PERCENT MORE THAN IN 1972, THE YEAR THE COMMON PROGRAM WAS SIGNED.

3. ANTIBES- (POPULATION: 48,000) THE PRESENT MAYOR, PIERRE MERLI, WAS ELECTED IN 1971 AS A MEMBER OF THE CENTRE GAUCHE, CENTRE DEMOCRATE. IN DECEMBER OF 1976 HE JOINED THE RADICAL PARTY (MAJORITY) AND AT THE SAME TIME, WAS ELECTED CO-PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATION RADICALE DES ALPES MARITIMES. HE HAS RECENTLY EXPRESSED SYMPATHY FOR THE IDEALS OF THE FEDERATION SOCIALISTES DEMOCRATES (ERIC HINTERMANN). THE CONSENSUS IS THAT MERLI WILL HAVE NO DIFFICULTY IN BEING RE-ELECTED AGAINST A COMMON PROGRAM LIST, YET TO BE ANNOUNCED. ANTIBES IS A GENERALLY CONSIDERED A RATHER COMPLEX COMMUNE IN THAT IT IS POPULATED BY A LARGE NUMBER OF "PIED-NOIRS", INCLUDES THE INFLUENTIAL JEWISH COMMUNITY IN JUAN-LES-PINS AS WELL AS

A LARGE GROUP OF HORTICULTURAL EMPLOYEES. ALTHOUGH MERLI  
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IS NOT A NATIVE ANTIBES, HE HAS BECOME POPULAR WITH THE  
VOTERS, MAINLY DUE TO HIS ADEPT ADMINISTRATION HE HAS AND  
THE CIVIC IMPROVEMENTS HE HAS FOSTERED. HE HAS  
BEEN PRAISED THROUGHOUT THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE REALIZATION OF  
THE NEW ANTIBES SPORT CENTER WHICH IS THE MOST MODERN ON  
THE COTE D'AZUR.

4. CANNES - (POPULATION: 71,00) THE PRESENT MAYOR,  
BERNARD CORNUT-GENTILE, AT 67 YEARS OF AGE AND IN SPITE  
OF OBVIOUS ILL HEALTH, HAS AGAIN DECIDED TO PRESENT HIS  
CANDIDACY, CORNUT-GENTILE HAS HAD A LONG CAREER OF  
GOVERNMENT SERVICE: PREFECT, COLONIAL GOVERNOR IN FRENCH  
WEST AFRICA, AMBASSADOR TO BOTH THE UNITED NATIONS AND  
ARGENTINA, MINISTER OF P.T. T. IN DEBRE GOVERNMENT AND  
DEPUTY. THROUGHOUT HIS CAREER HE HAS HAD THE REPUTATION  
OF AN EXCELLENT ADMINISTRATOR: THIS REPUTATION IS WELL  
DESERVED AS HE HAS DONE MUCH TO IMPROVE HIS INTERNATIONALLY  
KNOWN CITY---THE CITY OF QUOTE EX-KINGS, WELL-DRESSED  
GANGSTERS AND GIGOLOS UNQUOTE, AS CORNUT-GENTILE  
DESCRIBES HIS CITY. IN THE 1971 ELECTION, HE OBTAINED  
71 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. IN SPITE FO HIS AUTOCRATIC  
PERSONALITY AND HIS EVIDENT DISDAIN FOR THE PUBLIC, HE  
HAS WON THE ACCLAIM OF EVERYONE FOR HIS CIVIC ACCOMPLISH-  
MENTS: CONSTRUCTION OF NEW PORT FACILITIES, RECONSTRUCTION  
OF BEACH-FRONT, AND THE INSTALLATION OF NEW HIGHWAY NETWORK.  
I HAVE HEARD THAT ACQUES SALLEBERT, PRESENTLY  
DIRECTOR OF TV MONTE CARLO AND ALSO REGIONAL COUNSELOR  
ELECTED IN LAST CANTONAL, WHO HAS OFTEN SPOKEN IN PUBLIC IN  
FAVOR OF THE FEDERATION SOCIALISTES DEMOCRATES, WISHES TO  
RUN AGAINST CORNUT-GENTILE. THERE IS, HOWEVER, THE  
POSSIBILITY THAT LUCIEN NEUWIRTH (R.P.R.), DEPUTY FROM THE  
LOIRE, MAY BE SENT FROM PARIS TO FORM ANOTHER LIST. SHOULD  
THIS BE THE CASE, SLLEBERT WILL NOT PRESENT HIMSELF.  
TO DATE, NO COMMON PROGRAM CANDIDATES HAVE BEEN SUGGESTED.  
THE COMMUNIST VOTE IN THE CITY USUALLY ACCOUNTS FOR ONLY  
ABOUT 15 PERCENT OF THE BALLOT.

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5. THE MOST IMPORTANT TOWN IN THE ALPES MARITIMES TO BE HELD  
BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY IS THAT OF VALLAURIS (14,000  
INHABITANTS), A PORT CITY TO THE EAST OF CANNES. THE  
PRESENT MAYOR, PAUL DERIGON, WILL RUN FOR RE-ELECTION AND,

DUE TO HIS PERSONAL POPULARITY AND THE HIGH ESTEEM IN WHICH  
HE IS HELD IN THE TOWN, HE IS ALMOST SURE TO BE RE-ELECTED.  
THE SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNIST WILL GO THEIR SEPARATE WAYS  
IN VALLAURIS, AS THEY ARE UNABLE TO AGREE ON A COMMON LIST.  
THE SOCIALISTS HAVE REQUESTED A TOTAL OF 13 SEATS ON THE  
MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, INCLUDING THAT OF VICE-MAYOR, AS  
OPPOSED TO THE NINE SEATS WHICH DERIGON OFFERED THEM IN  
1971. THIS "INJUSTICE" HAS LED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF  
SEPARATE LISTS. MURPHY.

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
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**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Review Media Identifier:**  
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**Review Transfer Date:**  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009